



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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HAWAII RESIDENTS URGED TO PREPARE FOR MORE MICE

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) is urging residents across the state to prepare **now** for the increased numbers of mice we traditionally see during the spring and early summer. Health officials want to limit the contact between humans and wild mice because mice can spread diseases such as salmonella, leptospirosis, and possibly murine typhus.

“A wet winter produced a bumper crop of grass and weed seeds, supplying plenty of food for mice and their offspring, “ said Glenn Sugioka, East Oahu Supervisor in the Vector Control Branch. “When it starts getting dry and natural food supplies go away mice will start migrating and looking for food, possibly bringing them into someone's yard or home.”

The DOH is encouraging the public to take precautions now to control rodents in and around their homes by sealing all points of entry with ¼ inch mesh metal screen, sheet metal, or cement. Common entryways are wide gaps under doors, unscreened ceiling vent holes, and holes in wall around sewer and water pipes.

If you do have mice in your home DOH recommends you use snap traps. Check traps daily and remove dead mice quickly (seal them in a plastic bag or container and discard). Traps work best when all other food sources, such as pet food or garbage, are removed from the area.

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Take extra precaution when using poisons to control mice. Follow manufacturer's directions carefully. All poisons should be kept out of the reach of children and away from areas where pets could come in contact. Poisoning is not recommended indoors because of odor problems that may occur from mice dying in inaccessible areas.

Rodent fleas may also spread disease. It is important to control fleas that could leave dead mice and bite humans. Use only insecticides labeled specifically for flea control and follow directions exactly. Thoroughly vacuum carpet and furniture to remove flea eggs, larvae, pupae and adults before applying an aerosol insecticide labeled for fleas. Place disposable vacuum bag into plastic bag and discard in trash.

For more information about how to keep mice from becoming a health issue on your property call the Vector Control Branch at 483-2535 or visit the Department of Health's web site at www.hawaii.gov/health .

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